

34 TEPOZTLAN, A MEXICAN VILLAGE

251 another at right angles to the first until a structure is
343 raised tall enough to contain the maize to be stored.
The *cuezcomatl* (N. *cuezcomatl*) is a vasiform granary,
plastered inside and out with clay. In it is kept shelled
corn.

343 Perhaps every fourth dwelling has a sweathouse (S.
temazcal; N. *temazcalli*), well known as a part of the
pre-Columbian house group. This is made of stone
set in mortar. It is rectangular, approximately square,
and about five feet high at the center. The roof is
low peaked. The one entrance is barely large enough
to permit entrance of a man on hands and knees. Al-

• [515] though occasionally now used merely to achieve clean-
[757] liness, its use, as in pre-Columbian times, is chiefly
therapeutic.

231 These are all indigenous features. Although bees and
343 turkeys were domesticated before the Conquest, it is
not clear to what extent the beehive—a simple wooden
[177] box—and the fowlhouse preserve pre-Columbian ele-
ments. The fowlhouse (S. *gallinero*; N. *pizcalli*) is a
part of nearly every domestic establishment (but in
many homes some of the chickens perch on ladders in
a corner of the dwelling). It is usually built of stone,
to keep out marauding carnivores, and has about the
size and form of the sweathouse, except that the roof
is tiled. To protect a horse or *burro* a thatched or tiled
roof is erected in a corner of the yard. Something in

312 which to store water completes the house group. This
415 is either a plastered tank (S. *pila*) or a large jar (S.
tianja; N. *acomitl*) or merely an alcohol tin.

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After the first week has passed all the women and girls of the house bathe together in the *temazcal*. First they eat *elemole*, of which there is a large *olla*. They make little baskets of maguey fiber [S. *estrepaco*; N. *istli*] containing pieces of soap for all those who are to bathe in the *temazcal*. If it is the first child, the god-mother, who is always present, makes a *cacomixtle* of *estrepaco* with a cake of soap worth ten *centavos* inside it. The new mother is carried to the *temazcal* by a man. The others, including the midwife, bring with them into the *temazcal* a quarter of a liter of alcohol and an egg mixed together in a basin. The body and hair of the new mother are washed by the midwife, and the alcohol and egg mixture is thrown over her. All cover themselves with leaves, and as the fire heats, lie down on a *petate* until the perspiration comes. Then all wash again with warm water, soap, and *estrepaco*. The midwife does everything for the mother, finishing by binding her up with the *ceñidor*. [515] [846] [285] [608] [759]

Every week, as long as she stays in bed, the new mother and all those who are looking after her must bathe in the *temazcal*. Since this period usually lasts a month, this makes four baths. Some, however, reduce it to two weeks—"two *temazcals*."

As soon after the birth as possible [it may even be the same day], the child is taken to the church for baptism.¹ The child is taken by the godfather and godmother. After the baptism chocolate is drunk and *mamon*² is eaten. [851] [608] [262]

When the mother first goes out of doors after birth, thirty or forty days thereafter,³ the child is dressed in new clothes, and the mother, in company with the godparents, takes it to hear

¹ The absence of the priest is most felt in the omission of baptism. "Now our children are like animals."

² A cake of egg and cornstarch.

³ There is an inconsistency in the accounts as to the time. It should probably be forty days, because Christ was presented in the Temple forty days after birth (Candlemas). Gamio, describing the *sacamisa* (not so named there) for Teotihuacan, says that the purpose of the ritual is to solemnize the choice of godparents. Nothing in the Tepoztlán materials would confirm or deny this meaning. But it apparently has, in Tepoztlán, the meaning of a rite of passage; it introduces the child and reintroduces the mother into the community. On that day the rag doll (symbolizing the child in the womb) is taken from its place on the mother's abdomen. [846]

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spirits of the air. They are found wherever there is water—at water tanks, in ravines, at public washing-places, in the rain. They are thought of as very little people. The sure diagnostic feature is their appearance in dreams to the person afflicted; he sees them scolding him and striking at him. Then he knows that he has offended them.

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*Los aires*¹ may cause all sorts of mischief. Mere stumbling may be attributed to them. There are certain very characteristic symptoms, however. They disfigure the mouth (*tecamacolohua*); they bring spots (*texiomaca*); they bring pimples or sores (*tezahuama*); they cause palsy (*tecohcolotzohua*). Paralysis and scab-like sores are especially attributed to them.

An important part of the treatment for this disease is washing with certain herbs.² There are also several internal remedies. Powdered woodpecker's head is one of these. Amulets³ are worn to keep away the disease. People are careful to keep away from places where water collects. It is dangerous to bathe in the open for this reason.

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The washing with herbs should be done at the intersection of two streets. When it is completed, the bundle of herbs is flung away and everyone rushes into the house without looking back. Often the washing with herbs includes fumigation with the smoke of a cigarette.

¹ The name is applied to the beings as well as to the disease.

² Esp. *Piqueria trinervis* Cav. and *Sabia microphylla* H.B.K.

³ Commonly the seeds of *Mucuna*, perforated and equipped with bits of colored yarn.

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755 spring day he was on his way to San Andres to collect money due
 754 him for cattle sold on credit. Becoming tired, he rested beside
 the crosses at Cuicuitzacatla. He fell asleep, and while sleeping
 was soaked in a rainstorm. Next day he fell ill, and dreamed that
 little people were attacking him. He knew that in the rainstorm
los aires, offended, had attacked him. So he went to a *curandera*
 in Tepoztlán. She washed him with herbs and directed that he
 get a live chicken and have *tamales* made to give to *los aires*.
 She told him that the dolls made in Tepoztlán were not good
 enough for *los aires* in a case as serious as this, and that he should
 get a doll from the stores in Mexico City. This he did. But at
 the last minute the *curandera* stole the doll from the tray which
 she was taking to Cuicuitzacatla, and *los aires* did not receive it.
 Someone saw the *curandera* take the doll, and told the patient.

[757] He did not get better. He went then to a doctor in Mexico City,
 who treated him for several weeks, without improvement. In
 increasing distress R. C. heard of a spiritualist who had come to
 Yautepec and was curing people through the medium of the
 spirits. R. C. went to him, but again no cure was effected. He
 was then urged to try a *curandera* at Santiago who specialized in
 curing *los aires*. She told him that *los aires* had been enraged by
 the loss of the doll, and that he must do it all over again. The
 washing with herbs was repeated, and a new and larger doll ob-
 tained. Finally the *curandera* arranged "the last cure" (*la ultima*
cura). R. C. walked to Cuicuitzacatla. On one side of him walked
 a musician playing a flute to conciliate *los aires*, and on the other
 side a man with a whip who beat R. C. at intervals to show *los*
aires his penitence.

177 The abandonment of the older, more magical, more
 757 ritualistic treatment probably takes place first in the
 case of the minor disorders. Some traditional remedial
 acts tend to pass under scrutiny and to be justified
 because of the rationally comprehended means they
 employ to achieve the desired result. There is, for ex-
 ample, a notable difference in the way the sweat-house

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(*temazcal*) is regarded by a young *correcto* on the one ¹⁷⁷
hand and an old *tonto* on the other. The former no ⁷⁵⁷
longer practices all the ritualistic uses of the *temazcal*. ⁵¹⁵
There is a growing tendency to use the sweathouse ^[565]
simply in order to get clean, to become refreshed. The
temazcal is very slowly becoming secularized.

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312 and although this is the traditional and common practice, it is now considered a
 511 real hardship by more and more families. The quantity of water consumed by a
 family is usually determined by the amount of labor it can devote to water-carrying,
 and many families limit their use of water for bathing, for plants and animals, and
 for laundry. Use of the public laundry, generally considered undesirable, is made of
 [296] necessity by many. The few families with water piped into their patios invariably
 [351] have flourishing flower, fruit, and vegetable gardens. These families are very much
 [578] envied, and not infrequently their water pipes are deliberately stuffed or damaged
 by less fortunate neighbors.

The benefits of toilets are not as generally recognized, and only one private home
 514 and the two tourist houses have toilets that can be flushed. The new schoolhouse,
 [485] however, has toilets and showers, and the younger generation is becoming ac-
 [177] customed to their use. The schoolteachers, the students who have been away to
 boarding schools, and the not insignificant number of Tepostecans who have spent
 time in Mexico City are also familiar with the use of toilets and will undoubtedly
 be among the first to install them in their dwellings in the future. Some already
 have constructed screens around their latrines in their yards or orchards to afford
 some privacy.

515 Bathing facilities for women and children generally consist of a clay or tin basin
 at home; the men and older boys bathe in the river. Many women bathe and wash
 their hair when they do their laundry in a stream or at the public washing place.

354 No Tepostecan house has any means of heating other than the kitchen fire.
 511 This, however, gives little heat and is extinguished as soon as cooking is com-
 [513] pleted, to save fuel. In the winter months the family generally retires earlier to keep
 warm, but since most families have a minimum number of blankets, there is
 probably some suffering during the night due to cold. Except for early morning,
 the days are warm all the year round.

There are various means of lighting the house after dark, the most common
 and inexpensive being candles. Some homes have kerosene lamps and a few of the
 houses and stores in the center have Coleman gasoline lamps. One Tepostecan
 [377] house—that of the prosperous curer, Don Chucho—has electricity which is oper-
 ated by a privately owned generator. There is talk of installing electricity in the
 plaza and in the church and chapels near the center, and it is probably only a
 matter of time before this is done.

177 Differences in house furnishings are even more striking than differences in
 352 house types, and there is an unending variety of combinations of new and old or
 511 modern and primitive household items. It is not at all unusual to find under one
 roof a battery-operated radio, a pre-Hispanic hearth as the only means of cooking,
 a hand mill for grinding coffee, and the Indian stone *moteur* for grinding corn.
 Modern equipment for cooking, serving, sleeping, lighting, and so forth, is with
 few exceptions greatly esteemed; and in the majority of families only lack of
 money prevents its purchase. Among the youth, the more educated, and the
 large middle economic group, there is a strong desire to live better and to invest

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578 her mother, and may have looked to marriage as an escape from work and super-
 606 vision. When, after marriage, she finds herself working even harder for the family
 of her husband under the sharp, critical eye of her mother-in-law, the situation is
 one of jumping into the frying pan to be saved from the fire. The young wife today
 is more mature and more skilled than the child-wife of thirty years ago and no
 longer needs the mother-in-law's teaching and guidance.

Certain differences between the older and younger generation also affect mother-
 in-law and daughter-in-law relations. The mother-in-law, whose generation suf-
 fered the acute privation and misery of the Revolution and learned to live in the
 utmost economy, expects of her daughter-in-law a self-denial and economy for
 which the young woman is not always prepared. Often after marriage the young
 wife finds that she has fewer dresses and shoes, goes out much less to fiestas, to
 Cuernavaca, or to the movies. Many young women have learned to bathe three or
 • [575] four times a week and to change clothing whenever soiled, much to the annoyance
 of their mothers-in-law who must provide the soap and clothing.

In one case a mother-in-law scolded her daughter-in-law for this and said, "What
 difference is it to you if your dress is a little dirty. Is it for a lover that you are
 keeping yourself so clean?" Many young women have now become accustomed to
 [302] using face powder, lipstick, cold cream, toothpaste, and fine soap, the use of which
 is considered distasteful and extravagant by the mother-in-law and discontinued
 after marriage. Many of the younger married women chafe over the restraints
 placed upon their personal movements, their friendships, and, of course, their right
 [484] to go out unaccompanied. The slow but steady increase in the freedom of the
 younger women, particularly of those who have spent several years in school,
 makes the role of the daughter-in-law more difficult.

[596] The way out of an unpleasant relationship for both the mother-in-law and the
 daughter-in-law is to separate their households. Usually the young couple move
 out, but occasionally the old couple or the widowed mother-in-law will move away.
 If no other dwelling is available, separate households may be established in the same
 house site, with each family cooking over its own fire and carrying on its economic
 affairs independently. Sometimes the wife is unable to persuade her husband to
 move away or to convince him that she is not at fault, and is forced to continue to
 [576] live with her mother-in-law. Not infrequently, if the situation becomes too intoler-
 [586] able, the young wife will separate from her husband and return to the home of her
 parents. It is believed in the village that many marriages have been broken because
 the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law did not get on well together.

606 Father-in-law and daughter-in-law relations are generally similar to father-
 daughter relations, only more reserved. When the daughter-in-law lives in the same
 [596] household, she serves the father-in-law under the direction of the mother-in-law;
 beyond that, contacts between the two are generally few because the men spend
 [835] a good deal of time away from home. A few cases of incestuous relations between
 daughter-in-law and father-in-law have been reported. In each of these cases the
 [578] father was a widower, and the indiscretion caused deep family rifts.

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843 Care during pregnancy consists principally of massages of the abdomen by the
759 midwife. The general purpose of the massage is to make the birth easier and to
determine the position of the fetus. Midwives say they can change the position of
the fetus if necessary by means of massage. Faith in the importance of massage is
widespread, and there are few who do not take massages regularly. Newly married
women often begin to take massages during the second or third month, but others
do not begin until they feel movement. Since there is an additional charge of fifty
centavos (in 1943, the price ranged from twelve to twenty-five centavos) for each
[465] massage, there are many women who cannot afford to take them until the eighth or
ninth month. Sometimes the husband will object to the number of massages his
wife takes, and there may be quarrels. Massages are given every eight or fifteen
days, depending upon when they are started and what the pregnant woman can
afford. The patient lies down, with knees slightly bent, and the midwife gently
massages the abdomen from right to left.⁴ No oils or unguents are used.

797 Some say they can predict the sex of the baby by its position in the womb. If it is
843 to one side, near the hip, it will be a boy; if it is in the middle, it will be a girl. If the
fetus feels round, a girl is indicated; and if it feels elongated, it is a boy. If the
mother looks sleepy and if her face is white, the child will be a boy, because boys
are more "demanding" and make their mothers pale. If she is red-cheeked, the
child will be a girl. However, some informants believe just the opposite and say that
red cheeks indicate a boy because boys are more robust. If the mother becomes fatter
all around, including the hips, it will be a girl; if she protrudes only in front, it will
be a boy. It is also believed that a boy is born after nine months and a girl after
eight months.

843 The midwife advises the pregnant woman concerning self-care. She is not to lift
heavy objects but should continue to work because it makes the delivery easier.
It is believed that a woman who is lazy and who sleeps often during pregnancy
will have a difficult birth because the fetus adheres to the womb. Pregnant women

[825] should not urinate where an animal has just urinated because the rising steam may
cause inflammation of the womb. Pregnant women are also advised not to bathe
● 575 in the stream, since *los aires* may endanger the baby and cause it to be born with
843 physical defects.⁵ It is also said that bathing in the stream may cause the pregnant
woman to fill up with water. Although pregnant women sometimes continue to

[296] use the stream to wash clothes, this also is considered unwise. Some say that preg-
nant women should not bathe more than once a week for fear of catching cold, but
many women bathe every three days in warm or cold water, according to preference.

843 1945. In Cherán, in 1940, the cost of delivery was from 1½ to 2½ pesos. See Ralph L. Beah,
759 *Cherán, A Sierra Tarascan Village*, Institute of Social Anthropology Publ. No. 2 (Washington,
465 D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1946), p. 166.

171 ⁴ Foster describes the massage in Tzintzuntzan as "heavy pummeling" and attributes the
many miscarriages to this.

[114] ⁵ Redfield's informant said, "After three months she [the pregnant woman] goes to the
harranca [stream] to bathe. She may do this many times before the birth." According to our
data, although some women do it, this is generally regarded as undesirable.

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After the birth of the child, the mother is visited by the midwife every day for eight days, to be massaged and rebound. The massaging of the abdomen is considered important because it encourages the flow of blood and "cleanses" the mother internally. The appearance of clots of blood in the flow is taken to be evidence of the need for massaging. It is believed that if the mother does not receive massages, her abdomen will continue to protrude. The midwife also bathes the baby daily during her visits. The day after the birth of the child, close relatives usually come with jars of suitable food for the mother. A week or two later, aunts, uncles, and cousins may come bringing food for the mother and perhaps wrap for the baby. In some families, because of ill feeling between in-laws, one side of the family may stay away. If the new mother has not been properly married or is not approved, she may receive no visits from her husband's or her own family. One young woman from a small outlying village, who had recently married into the village of Tepoztlán, received no visits from her husband's family at the birth of her first child; they regarded her as an outsider and disapproved of the marriage. Many women remain resentful for years at relatives who do not visit them at this time.

The mother is expected to stay in bed for from thirty to forty days. Those who cannot do this stay in bed for at least fifteen days; anything less is considered gross neglect. During this period the mother is urged to lie quietly on one side with her legs close together and her knees bent. Once or twice a day her husband or mother-in-law turns her over on her other side. Some women do not lift their heads at first but drink through a straw. During the first eight days, a new mother should remain behind the curtain because she is in a "delicate" state. She is not to be visited by anyone who has been to a wake or funeral because that visitor may carry a *mal humor* which causes "cancer" in menstruating women.

The *temascal*, which is still widely used even by those women who go to doctors, is usually given after eight days, though some midwives give it after fifteen days. (See Fig. 53.) Most women do not take their first *temascal* until after bleeding has stopped. Before the *temascal*, the mother, midwife, and other women of the house may also bathe and eat *clemole*—a dish made of chicken or beef, with the bone cooked in washed, ground chile *pasilla*—and a piece of *epazote*. The mother eats only the meat, for the chile sauce is "cold" and bad for her. She eats at this time to give her strength for the ordeal of the *temascal*, for some women faint or vomit from the extreme heat. Unmarried mothers sometimes do not use the *temascal* but bathe at home after twenty days in bed. A few younger women do not like the heat of the *temascal* and bathe in warm water in which some rosemary has been boiled. On the day of the *temascal*, the midwife, for the first and only time, must limit her diet to what the mother eats. A fire is made in the *temascal*, and a large can of hot water is placed there. Leaves of white *sapote* are placed on the floor, and a small bundle of these leaves are tied together to form a brush.

The mother is well wrapped and is traditionally carried to the *temascal* on the

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515 back of her husband. Although this is still done by many, the woman is now often
 846 carried on a board by two men. Some men find it embarrassing to carry their wives
 and hire someone to do it for them. Some of the younger women walk to the
temascal. The new baby is also taken to the *temascal* with the mother and is briefly
 exposed to the steam, then carefully wrapped and taken home. Many modern
 [753] women disapprove of giving infants and small children sweatbaths and believe
 that they cause navel hemorrhages and even death. A bunch of *sapote* leaves are

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Fig. 53. A sweathouse.

placed between the mother's thighs to cover the genitals. Throughout the bath, the
 midwife is assisted by a female relative of the mother. The midwife rubs the
 mother's body with egg and alcohol, particularly on the face and back; for this
 [278] mixture is thought to prevent *paño*.

The mother then lies down on the leaves, and spoonfuls of water are thrown into
 the fire to make it steam. The midwife rubs the mother with the brush of leaves.
 After this she asks for the *estropajo*, which is a brush of *ixtle* in the form of a
 basket, containing a piece of soap. This basket may be made in the shape of an
 animal and is presented by the baby's godmother. Some women do not like to be
 [608] washed with the *estropajo* because it is too harsh for their skins, and they use
 something else. The midwife washes the mother's entire body except for the
 genitals, which the mother washes herself. Warm water is thrown over her to wash
 off the soap, and she is dried. She is rebound and wrapped in a sheet and carried
 back to bed. When she leaves, the other women of the house, friends, and neighbors
 may take advantage of the hot *temascal* to bathe. These baths are taken by the
 mother every eight days for as long as she stays in bed. Almost everyone takes at
 least two *temascales*, and many take the traditional four. After the first *temascal*

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551 which the child is most frequently called. Many names are shortened for daily use, and nicknames are common for boys. The children take the surname of the father as their own. For example, when Juan Gómez marries Carlota Villamar, their son Francisco may sign his name as Francisco Gómez Villamar or just Francisco Gómez.²

291 The parents alone, or sometimes with the help of the grandparents, prepare the
854 necessary clothing for the new baby. In former days, when a girl married at twelve or thirteen, the burden of preparation for the first child fell upon her mother-in-law or mother who usually made baby clothes out of old clothing. Although this is still true in the majority of cases, some more acculturated young wives prepare new baby clothes when they become pregnant for the first time. Later children are generally dressed in the used clothing of the first child. Used clothing is given away only to intimate relatives or to poor people who beg; to offer such clothing to friends or distant relatives would offend them.

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Infants are dressed in cotton shirts and *pañales* or diapers of rags tied around the waist with a string. This string is often tied so tightly as to leave a deep red welt. The clothing of infants up to three months is generally warmed before being put on. Dresses are put on girls, and pants on boys, at about four months. Young infants are kept warm by a blanket; older ones, particularly in better-to-do families, by woolen sweaters. Girls' ears are pierced usually about one week after birth, but often later, by a competent female. Red, green, or black silk thread is drawn through the ears until earrings are provided.

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Infants are expected to be kept fairly clean. Most babies up to one year are bathed every three days, but some young mothers bathe their first-born son every day, sometimes even twice a day if the infant is restless. They are bathed in warm water during the warmest part of the day. Most mothers are careful to keep the soap out of the baby's eyes, and babies seem to enjoy their baths. After the bath they are rubbed with alcohol to warm them or are dusted with talcum and are dressed in clean clothing.

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Pañales are changed whenever soiled or only once a day, depending upon the mother. In general, first-born or favorite children are changed more often, as are the children of the more educated families. Other women tend to add dry cloths over the wet ones and make a complete change only when there is a bowel movement. The most *dejada* or careless mothers reuse soiled rags without washing them and may not clean the child for a long time after a bowel movement. For the most part, however, babies are kept clean and do not suffer unduly from rashes or skin irritations caused by diapers.

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² It is interesting to note that as late as 1806, most people in Tepoztlán still followed the Indian custom of identifying people by the name of their house site, in Náhuatl. A census of the village taken at this date shows most of the names as names of house sites, with the first name in Spanish preceding it. The following are some examples of how the names appear in this census, Juan Isidro Tlatelpa, Mariano Eusebio Tecuapan, María Tomasa Tecuapan, María Victoriano Ayopac, María Luisa Tejocac, etc. Note that the surnames are in Náhuatl. These "surnames" were really the names of the house sites, or *sitios*.

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be cause for a sharp scolding or slap. Ideally, the girl is not supposed to leave the house unaccompanied, though expediency frequently demands that she does. 584
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The responsibility of guarding the chastity and reputation of one or more daughters of marriageable age is often felt to be a burden by the mother. One mother said that she wished her fifteen-year-old daughter would marry soon because it was inconvenient to "spy" on her all the time. 836

For most girls, the appearance of the first menses is a traumatic experience. Many fear it signifies that they are no longer virgins, others that they have an internal lesion and will bleed to death. Most girls associate it with something shameful, dirty, and even punishable, and keep it secret from parents and sisters. A very much frightened girl sometimes seeks reassurance by confiding in her grandmother or in a friend. Girls who are still in school at an age when there is interest in such matters generally learn some of the facts of menstruation from other girls. There is a tendency for more educated girls to feel less guilt and be less secretive about menstruation both in school and at home, but almost all girls express shame and disgust in connection with it. 881

When girls married before puberty, it was widely believed that menstruation was caused by sexual intercourse. When marriages began to take place after puberty, this belief broke down and is no longer held by most people, but it still persists among some. For example, an uncle, who accidentally became aware that his fifteen-year-old niece was menstruating, denounced the girl as not being a virgin and scolded her mother for not guarding her. 833
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The grandmother, or the mother when she learns of it, gives the girl advice on proper care during menstruation. Most warn against bathing or washing the feet or eating "cold" foods, such as pork, avocado, beans, and lemon, since these are believed to stop the flow. Menstruation is expected to last three days, and the flow is generally sparse, requiring only the wearing of an extra pair of under-drawers. If the flow is longer than three or four days, there is some concern over it, and herb medicines are usually taken. 515
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The adjustment of the adolescent girl to her situation at home varies considerably. In large part it depends upon the girl's relations with the mother, since it is with her that there is most contact. The close relationship of the adolescent girl with her mother is recent in Tepoztlán, for child marriage and patrilocal residence in past years effectively severed the mother-daughter tie. The young daughter-in-law was looked upon as the main source of assistance for the mother. Now it is the grown daughter who partially fills this role. Her work is obligatory, "Why then do we rear children except to help us?" The mother of a grown girl is considered fortunate because "now she has someone to work for her." 593
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Many of the attitudes of the mother-in-law toward the daughter-in-law have been carried over to the daughter. There is a tendency for mothers to "retire" from most of the heavy household duties and to shift the major burden of the household upon the daughters, assuming the role of director rather than partner. Many mothers are critical, demanding, and querulous with their daughters and scold 594